

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO OFFER RESOLUTION RAISING A QUES- TION OF THE PRIVILEGES OF THE HOUSE

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 2(a)(1) of rule IX, I hereby notify the House of my intention to offer a resolution as a question of the privileges of the House.

The form of my resolution is as follows:

Whereas, The Hill reported that a prominent lobbying firm specializing in obtaining defense earmarks for its clients, the subject of a "federal investigation into potentially corrupt political contributions," has given \$3.4 million in political donations to no less than 284 Members of Congress.

Whereas, multiple press reports have noted questions related to campaign contributions made by or on behalf of the firm; including questions related to "straw man" contributions, the reimbursement of employees for political giving, pressure on clients to give, a suspicious pattern of giving, and the timing of donations relative to legislative activity.

Whereas, Roll Call has taken note of the timing of contributions from employees of the firm and its clients when it reported that they "have provided thousands of dollars worth of campaign contributions to key Members in close proximity to legislative activity, such as the deadline for earmark request letters or passage of a spending bill."

Whereas, CQ Today specifically noted a Member getting "\$25,000 in campaign contribution money from [the founder of the firm] and his relatives right after his subcommittee approved its spending bill in 2005."

Whereas, the Associated Press also noted that Members received campaign contributions from employees of the firm "around the time they requested" earmarks for companies represented by the firm.

Whereas, clients of the firm received at least \$300 million worth of earmarks in fiscal year 2009 appropriations legislation, including several that were approved even after news of the FBI raid of the firm's offices and Justice Department investigation into the firm was well known.

Whereas, the persistent media attention focused on questions about the nature and timing of campaign contributions related to the firm, as well as reports of the Justice Department conducting research on earmarks and campaign contributions, raise concern about the integrity of Congressional proceedings and the dignity of this institution.

Now, therefore, be it *Resolved*, That

(a) the Committee on Standards of Official Conduct, or a subcommittee of the committee designated by the committee and its members appointed by the chairman and ranking member, shall immediately begin an investigation into the relationship between the source and timing of past contributions to Members of the House related to the raided firm and earmark requests made by Members of the House on behalf of clients of the raided firm.

(b) The Committee on Standards of Official Conduct shall submit a report of its findings to the House of Representatives within 2 months after the date of adoption of this resolution.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule IX, a resolution offered from the floor by a Member other than the majority leader or the minority leader as a question of the privileges of the House has immediate precedence only at a time designated by the Chair within 2 legislative days after the resolution is properly noticed.

Pending that designation, the form of the resolution noticed by the gentleman from Arizona will appear in the RECORD at this point.

The Chair will not at this point determine whether the resolution constitutes a question of privilege. That determination will be made at the time designated for consideration of the resolution.

THE ADMINISTRATION ISN'T PROTECTING AMERICANS' JOBS

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, in 2006, Senator Obama told his colleagues, "We need an electronic verification system that can significantly reduce the employment of illegal workers, and give employers the confidence that their workforce is legal."

E-Verify is the voluntary Federal program that does just that by allowing employers to check the employment eligibility of their newly hired employees. Yet the Democrats have blocked every single attempt made so far this year to enact a long-term extension of E-Verify.

Instead of protecting jobs for U.S. citizens and legal workers, President Obama signed a bill that will provide 300,000 jobs to illegal immigrants in just the construction industry alone.

With 12 million Americans out of work, we should save jobs for American workers and legal immigrants, not give jobs to illegal workers.

ECONOMIC 9/11

(Mr. COHEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend our President, the administration, for the bold action they took today to help resolve our economic morass that we are expressing because of the past administration and the lack of regulations by this Congress. The stock market responded positively with a 500-point gain.

I think it's important that people recognize the good that the administration is doing and trying to do, that we need to work together as a team, as Americans.

After 9/11, Republicans and Democrats came together to support the President and support us in a great crisis. This is an economic 9/11. People should support the President and not do critical things.

Some of them have even suggested, oh, he had time to fill out his NCAA bracket, where he correctly had the Memphis Tigers going to the Sweet Sixteen. There's nothing wrong with that. President Obama is good on the Sweet Sixteen, and he's good on the economy.

COMMENDING KEVIN PETERSEN

(Mr. MCCARTHY of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MCCARTHY of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the career of a committed public servant, Kevin Petersen, who retires April 3, 2009, as director of NASA's Dryden Flight Research Center located in my district. Kevin has served at Dryden for 38 years and is currently NASA's longest-serving field center director.

Kevin began his career at Dryden as a university cooperative student in 1971, was hired as an aerospace engineer when he graduated from Iowa State in 1974, and later received a Master of Science degree from UCLA.

Kevin was appointed to be Dryden's director in 1999. His tenure as director has seen Dryden's focus on aeronautics research expand to also support work in environmental and space science, space exploration, and human spaceflight. Currently, Dryden has the important task of testing the new Orion Launch Abort System. I appreciated Kevin showing me around that key program when I visited.

Kevin Petersen is a role model for all American students considering a career in science, technology, engineering or mathematics. Kevin, you've been a great public servant. I appreciate your dedication, and I wish you the best of luck.

CHIEF MARK McCURRY: FIRE CHIEF OF THE YEAR

(Mr. MCHENRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MCHENRY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Fire Chief Mark McCurry of Forest City, North Carolina. Chief McCurry was recently named Fire Chief of the Year by the North Carolina Association of Fire Chiefs. It is their highest honor.

Thirty-five years ago, Mark's uncle encouraged him to go into the family business of fire service. Now, 35 years later, Chief McCurry is still serving the community of Forest City. He says putting his life on the line to protect those of his fellow citizens is "like a calling."

Chief McCurry understands that his men no longer just put out fires. All Forest City firemen are now certified EMTs and trained to deal with hazardous materials and weather emergencies.

Mark McCurry recently said, "It takes a crazy person to run into a building that everyone else is running out of." I think we all agree, but no, Chief, it takes an extraordinarily brave man to run into a burning building. And this year, your peers have recognized you as the bravest of all. Congratulations.